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THE SERVICE EDITION  
OF  
THE WORKS OF  
RUDYARD KIPLING



# **THE SEVEN SEAS**

**VOL. I**



# THE SEVEN SEAS

BY RUDYARD KIPLING

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I



278

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## DEDICATION

TO THE CITY OF BOMBAY

*The Cities are full of pride,  
Challenging each to each—  
This from her mountain-side,  
That from her burthened beach.*

*They count their ships full tale—  
Their corn and oil and wine,  
Derrick and loom and bale,  
And rampart's gun-flecked line,  
City by City they hail:  
'Hast aught to match with mine?'*

*And the men that breed from them  
They traffic up and down,  
But cling to their cities' hem  
As a child to the mother's gown.*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

*When they talk with the stranger bands,  
Dazed and newly alone ;  
When they walk in the stranger lands,  
By roaring streets unknown ;  
Blessing her where she stands  
For strength above their own.*

*(On high to hold her fame  
That stands all fame beyond,  
By oath to back the same,  
Most faithful-foolish-fond ;  
Making her mere-breathed name  
Their bond upon their bond.)*

*So thank I God my birth  
Fell not in isles aside—  
Waste headlands of the earth,  
Or warring tribes untried—  
But that she lent me worth  
And gave me right to pride.*

*Surely in toil or fray .  
Under an alien sky,  
Comfort it is to say :  
' Of no mean city am I ! '*

## DEDICATION

(*Neither by service nor fee  
Come I to mine estate—  
Mother of Cities to me,  
For I was born in her gate,  
Between the palms and the sea,  
Where the world-end steamers wait.*)

*Now for this debt I owe,  
And for her far-borne cheer  
Must I make haste and go  
With tribute to her pier.*

*And she shall touch and remit  
After the use of kings  
(Orderly, ancient, fit)  
My deep-sea plunderings,  
And purchase in all lands.  
And this we do for a sign  
Her power is over mine,  
And mine I hold at her hands!*



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## **THE SEVEN SEAS**

**I.—A**



## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

*FAIR is our lot—O goodly is our heritage !  
(Humble ye, my people, and be fearful in  
your mirth !)*

*For the Lord our God Most High  
He hath made the deep as dry,  
He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all  
the Earth !*

*Yea, though we sinned—and our rulers went from  
righteousness—*

*Deep in all dishonour though we stained our gar-  
ments' hem.*

*Oh be ye not dismayed,  
Though we stumbled and we strayed,  
We were led by evil counsellors—the Lord shall  
deal with them !*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

*Hold ye the Faith—the Faith our Fathers sealed us ;  
Whoring not with visions—overwise and overstale.*

*Except ye pay the Lord  
Single heart and single sword,  
Of your children in their bondage shall He ask  
them treble-tale !*

*Keep ye the Law—be swift in all obedience—  
Clear the land of evil, drive the road and bridge the ford.*

*Make ye sure to each his own  
That he reap where he hath sown ;  
By the peace among Our peoples let men know we  
serve the Lord !*

. . . . .

*Hear now a song—a song of broken interludes—  
A song of little cunning ; of a singer nothing worth.  
Through the naked words and mean  
May ye see the truth between.  
As the singer knew and touched it in the ends of all  
the Earth !*

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

### THE COASTWISE LIGHTS

OUR brows are bound with spindrift and the  
weed is on our knees ;  
Our loins are battered 'neath us by the swinging,  
smoking seas.  
From reef and rock and skerry—over headland,  
ness, and vœ—  
The Coastwise Lights of England watch the ships  
of England go !

Through the endless summer evenings, on the  
lineless, level floors ;  
Through the yelling•Channel tempest when the  
siren hoots and roars—  
By day the dipping house-flag and by night the  
rocket's trail•  
As the sheep that graze behind us so we know  
them where they hail.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

We bridge across the dark, and bid the helmsman  
have a care,  
The flash that wheeling inland wakes his sleeping  
wife to prayer ;  
From our vexed eyries, head to gale, we bind in  
burning chains  
The lover from the sea-rim drawn—his love in  
English lanes.

We greet the clippers wing-and-wing that race  
the Southern wool ;  
We warn the crawling cargo-tanks of Bremen,  
Leith, and Hull ;  
To each and all our equal lamp at peril of the  
sea—  
The white wall-sided warships or the whalers of  
Dundee !

Come up, come in from Eastward, from the  
guard-ports of the Morn !

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

Beat up, beat in from Southerly, O gipsies of  
the Horn !

Swift shuttles of an Empire's loom that weave  
us, main to main,

The Coastwise Lights of England give you  
welcome back again !

Go, get you gone up-Channel with the sea-crust  
on your plates ;

Go, get you into London with the burden of your  
freights !

Haste, for they talk of Empire there, and say, if  
any seek,

The Lights of England sent you and by silence  
shall ye speak !

•

## THE SONG OF THE DEAD

*HEAR now the Song of the Dead—in the North by  
the torn berg-edges—*

*They that look still to the Pole, asleep by their hide-  
stripped sledges.*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

*Song of the Dead in the South—in the sun by their  
skeleton horses,*

*Where the warrigal whimpers and bays through the  
dust of the sere river-courses.*

*Song of the Dead in the East—in the heat-rotted  
jungle hollows,*

*Where the dog-ape barks in the kloof—in the brake  
of the buffalo-wallows.*

*Song of the Dead in the West—in the Barrens, the  
waste that betrayed them,*

*Where the wolverine tumbles their packs from the  
camp and the grave-mound they made them ;*

*Hear now the Song of the Dead !*

### I

We were dreamers, dreaming greatly, in the  
man-stifled town ;

We yearned beyond the sky-line where the strange  
roads go down.

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

Came the Whisper, came the Vision, came the  
Power with the Need,

Till the Soul that is not man's soul was lent us  
to lead.

As the deer breaks—as the steer breaks—from  
the herd where they graze,

In the faith of little children we went on our  
ways.

Then the wood failed—then the food failed—then  
the last water dried—

In the faith of little children we lay down and  
died.

On the sand-drift—on the veldt-side—in the  
fern-scrub we lay,

That our sons might follow after by the bones on  
the way.

Follow after—follow after ! We have watered  
the root,

And the bud has come to blossom that ripens for  
fruit !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Follow after—we are waiting, by the trails that  
we lost,

For the sounds of many footsteps, for the tread  
of a host.

Follow after—follow after—for the harvest is  
sown :

By the bones about the wayside ye shall come to  
your own !

*When Drake went down to the Horn  
And England was crowned thereby,  
'Twixt seas unsailed and shores unhailed  
Our Lodge—our Lodge was born  
(And England was crowned thereby !)*

a

*Which never shall close again  
By day nor yet by night,  
While man shall take his life to stake  
At risk of shoal or main  
(By day nor yet by night).*

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

*But standeth even so  
As now we witness here,  
While men depart, of joyful heart,  
Adventure for to know  
(As now bear witness here !)*

### II

We have fed our sea for a thousand years  
And she calls us, still unfed,  
Though there 's never a wave of all her waves  
But marks our English dead :  
We have strawed our best to the weed's unrest,  
To the shark and the sheering gull.  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
Lord God, we ha' paid in full !

There 's never a flood goes shoreward now  
But lifts a keel we manned ;  
There 's never an ebb goes seaward now  
But drops our dead on the sand—

### III

## THE SEVEN SEAS

But slinks our dead on the sands forlore,  
From the Ducies to the Swin.  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
Lord God, we ha' paid it in !

We must feed our sea for a thousand years,  
For that is our doom and pride,  
As it was when they sailed with the *Golden Hind*,  
Or the wreck that struck last tide—  
Or the wreck that lies on the spouting reef  
Where the ghastly blue-lights flare.  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
Lord God, we ha' bought it fair !

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

### THE DEEP-SEA CABLES

THE wrecks dissolve above us ; their dust drops  
down from afar—

Down to the dark, to the utter dark, where the  
blind white sea-snakes are.

There is no sound, no echo of sound, in the deserts  
of the deep,

Or the great grey level plains of ooze where the  
shell-burried cables creep.

Here in the womb of the world—here on the tie-  
ribs of earth

Words, and the words of men, flicker and  
flutter and beat—

Warning, sorrow and gain, salutation and  
mirth—

For a Power troubles the Still that has neither  
voice nor feet.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

They have wakened the timeless Things ; they  
have killed their father Time ;  
Joining hands in the gloom, a league from the  
last of the sun.

Hush ! Men talk to-day o'er the waste of the  
ultimate slime,

And a new Word runs between : whispering,  
' Let us be one ! '

## THE SONG OF THE SONS

ONE from the ends of the earth—gifts at an open  
door—

Treason has much, but we, Mother, thy sons have  
more !

From the whine of a dying man, from the snarl  
of a wolf-pack freed,

Turn, and the world is thine. ' Mother, be proud  
of thy seed !

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

Count, are we feeble or few ? Hear, is our  
speech so rude ?

Look, are we poor in the land ? Judge, are we  
men of The Blood ?

Those that have stayed at thy knees, Mother, go  
call them in—

We that were bred overseas wait and would  
speak with our kin.

Not in the dark do we fight—haggle and flout  
and gibe ;

Selling our love for a price, loaning our hearts for  
a bribe.

Gifts have we only to-day—Love without promise  
or fee—

Hear, for thy children speak, from the uttermost  
parts of the sea !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

### THE SONG OF THE CITIES

#### BOMBAY

Royal and Dower-royal, I the Queen  
Fronting thy richest sea with richer hands—  
A thousand mills roar through me where I glean  
All races from all lands.

#### CALCUTTA

Me the Sea-captain loved, the River built,  
Wealth sought and Kings adventured life to  
hold.  
Hail, England ! I am Asia—Power on silt,  
Death in my hands, but Gold !

#### MADRAS

Clive kissed me on the mouth and eyes and brow,  
Wonderful kisses, so that I became  
Crowned above Queens—a withered beldame now,  
Brooding on ancient fame.

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

### RANGOON

Hail, Mother ! Do they call me rich in trade ?  
Little care I, but hear the shorn priest  
drone,  
And watch my silk-clad lovers, man by maid,  
Laugh 'neath my Shwe Dagon.

### SINGAPORE

Hail, Mother ! East and West must seek my  
aid  
Ere the spent gear may dare the ports afar.  
The second doorway of the wide world's trade  
Is mine to loose or bar.



### HONG-KONG

Hail, Mother ! Hold me fast ; my Praya sleeps  
Under innumerable keels to-day.  
Yet guard (and landward), or to-morrow sweeps  
Thy warships down the bay !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

### HALIFAX

Into the mist my guardian prows put forth,  
Behind the mist my virgin ramparts lie,  
The Warden of the Honour of the North,  
Sleepless and veiled am I !

### QUEBEC AND MONTREAL

Peace is our portion. Yet a whisper rose,  
Foolish and causless, half in jest, half hate.  
Now wake we and remember mighty blows,  
And, fearing no man, wait !

### VICTORIA

From East to West the circling word has  
passed,  
Till West is East beside our land-locked  
blue ;  
From East to West the tested chain holds fast,  
The well-forged link rings true !

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

### CAPETOWN

Hail ! Snatched and bartered oft from hand to  
hand,  
I dream my dream, by rock and heath and pine,  
Of Empire to the northward. Ay, one land  
From Lion's Head to Line !

### MELBOURNE

Greeting ! Nor fear nor favour won us place,  
Got between greed of gold and dread of  
drouth,  
Loud-voiced and reckless as the wild tide-race  
That whips our harbour-mouth !

•

### SYDNEY

Greeting ! My birth-stain have I turned to good ;  
Forcing strong wills perverse to steadfastness :  
The first flush of the tropics in my blood,  
And at my feet Success !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

### BRISBANE

The northern stirp beneath the southern  
skies—

I build a Nation for an Empire's need,  
Suffer a little, and my land shall rise,  
Queen over lands indeed !

### HOBART

Man's love first found me ; man's hate made me  
Hell ;  
For my babes' sake I cleansed those infamies.  
Earnest for leave to live and labour well,  
God flung me peace and ease.

»

### AUCKLAND

Last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart—  
On us, on us the unswerving season smiles,  
Who wonder 'mid our fern why men depart  
To seek the Happy Isles !

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

### ENGLAND'S ANSWER

TRULY ye come of The Blood ; slower to bless  
than to ban ;

Little used to lie down at the bidding of any man.  
Flesh of the flesh that I bred, bone of the bone  
that I bare ;

Stark as your sons shall be—stern as your fathers  
were.

Deeper than speech our love, stronger than life  
our tether,

But we do not fall on the neck nor kiss when we  
come together.

My arm is nothing weak, my strength is not  
gone by ;

Sons, I have borne many sons, but my dugs are  
not dry.

Look, I have made ye a place and opened wide  
the doors,

That ye may talk together, your Barons and  
Councillors—

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Wards of the Outer March, Lords of the Lower  
Seas,

Ay, talk to your grey mother that bore you on  
her knees !—

That ye may talk together, brother to brother's  
face—

Thus for the good of your peoples—thus for the  
Pride of the Race.

Also, we will make promise. So long as The  
Blood endures,

I shall know that your good is mine : ye shall  
feel that my strength is yours :

In the day of Armageddon, at the last great fight  
of all,

That Our House stand together and the pillars  
do not fall.

Draw now the threefold knot firm on the nine-  
fold bands,

And the Law that ye make shall be law after  
the rule of your lands.

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

This for the waxen Heath, and that for the  
Wattle-bloom,

This for the Maple-leaf, and that for the southern  
Broom.

The Law that ye make shall be law and I do not  
press my will,

Because ye are Sons of The Blood and call me  
Mother still.

Now must ye speak to your kinsmen and they  
must speak to you,

After the use of the English, in straight-flung  
words and few.

Go to your work and be strong, halting not in  
your ways,

Baulking the end half-won for an instant dole of  
praise.

Stand to your work and be wise—certain of  
sword and pen,

Who are neither children nor Gods, but men in a  
world of men !

## THE FIRST CHANTEY

MINE was the woman to me, darkling I  
found her :

Haling her dumb from the camp, held her and  
bound her.

Hot rose her tribe on our track ere I had proved her;  
Hearing her laugh in the gloom, greatly I loved her.

Swift through the forest we ran ; none stood to  
guard us,

Few were my people and far ; then the flood  
barred us—

Him we call Son of the Sea, sullen and swollen.

Panting we waited the death, stealer and stolen.

Yet ere they came to my lance laid for the  
slaughter,

Lightly she leaped to a log lapped in the water ;

## THE FIRST CHANTEY

Holding on high and apart skins that arrayèd her,  
Called she the God of the Wind that He should  
aid her.

Life had the tree at that word (Praise we the  
Giver !)

Otter-like left he the bank for the full river.  
Far fell their axes behind, flashing and ringing,  
Wonder was on me and fear—yet she was singing !

Low lay the land we had left. Now the blue  
bound us,

Even the Floor of the Gods level around us.

Whisper there was not, nor word, shadow nor  
showing,

Till the light stirred on the deep, glowing and  
growing.

Then did He leap to His place flaring from under,  
He the Compeller, the Sun, bared to our wonder.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Nay, not a league from our eyes blinded with  
gazing,

Cleared He the gate of the world, huge and  
amazing !

This we beheld (and we live)—the Pit of the  
Burning !

Then the God spoke to the tree for our returning ;  
Back to the beach of our flight, fearless and slowly,  
Back to our slayers went he : but we were holy.

Men that were hot in that hunt, women that  
followed,

Babes that were promised our bones, trembled  
and wallowed :

Over the necks of the Tribe crouching and fawn-  
ing—

Prophet and priestess we came back from the  
dawning !

## THE LAST CHANTEY

*'And there was no more sea.'*

THUS said The Lord in the Vault above  
the Cherubim,

Calling to the Angels and the Souls in their  
degree :

' Lo ! Earth has passed away  
On the smoke of Judgment Day.

That Our word may be established shall We  
gather up the sea ? '

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners :

' Plague upon the hurricane that made us furl  
and flee !

But the war is done between us,  
In the deep the Lord hath seen us—  
Our bones we 'll leave the barracout', and  
God may sink the sea ! '

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Then said the soul of Judas that betrayèd Him :

‘ Lord, hast Thou forgotten Thy covenant  
with me ?

How once a year I go  
To cool me on the floe ?

And Ye take my day of mercy if Ye take away  
the sea ! ’

Then said the soul of the Angel of the Off-shore  
Wind :

(He that bits the thunder when the bull-  
mouthing breakers flee) :

‘ I have watch and ward to keep  
O'er Thy wonders on the deep,  
And Ye take mine honour from me if Ye take  
away the sea ! ’

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners :  
‘ Nay, but we were angry, and a hasty folk  
are we !

## THE LAST CHANTEY

If we workcd the ship together  
Till she foundered in foul weather,  
Are we babes that we should clamour for a  
vengeance on the sea ? '

Then said the souls of the slaves that men threw  
overboard :

' Kennelled in the picaroon a weary band were  
we ;  
But Thy arm was strong to save,  
And it touched us on the wave,  
And we drowsed the long tides idle till Thy  
Trumpets tore the sea.'

Then cried the soul of the stout Apostle Paul to  
God :

' Once we frapped a ship, and she laboured  
woundily.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

There were fourteen score of these,  
And they blessed Thee on their knees,  
When they learned Thy Grace and Glory under  
Malta by the sea ! '

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,  
Plucking at their harps, and they plucked un-  
handily :

' Our thumbs are rough and tarred,  
And the tune is something hard—  
May we lift a Deepsea Chantey such as seamen  
use at sea ? '

Then said the souls of the gentlemen-adven-  
turers—

Fettered wrist to bar all for red iniquity :  
' Ho, we revel in our chains  
O'er the sorrow that was Spain's ;  
Heave or sink it, leave or drink it, we were  
masters of the sea ! '

## THE LAST CHANTEY

Up spake the soul of a gray Gothavn 'speck-shioneer—

(He that led the flinching in the fleets of fair Dundee) :

‘ Oh, the ice-blink white and near,  
And the bowhead breaching clear !

Will Yc whelm them all for wantonness that  
wallow in the sea ? ’

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,  
Crying : ‘ Under Heaven, herc is neither lead  
nor lee !

Must we sing for evermore  
On the windless, glassy floor ?

Take back your golden fiddles and we ’ll beat  
to open sea ! ’

Then stooped the Lord, and He called the good  
sea up to Him,  
And ’stablished his borders unto all eternity,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

That such as have no pleasure  
For to praise the Lord by measure,  
They may enter into galleons and serve Him  
on the sea.

*Sun, wind, and cloud shall fail not from the face  
of it,*  
*Stinging, ringing spindrift, nor the fulmar fly-  
ing free ;*  
*And the ships shall go abroad*  
*To the Glory of the Lord*  
*Who heard the silly sailor-folk and gave them*  
*back their sea !*

## THE MERCHANTMEN

KING SOLOMON drew merchantmen,  
Because of his desire  
For peacocks, apes, and ivory,  
From Tarshish unto Tyre :  
With cedars out of Lebanon  
Which Hiram rafted down,  
But we be only sailormen  
That use in London town.

*Coastwise—cross-seas—round the world and back  
again—*

*Where the flaw shall head us or the full Trade  
suits—*

*Plain-sail—storm-sail—lay your board and tack  
again—*

*And that's the way we'll pay Paddy Doyle for  
his boots !*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

We bring no store of ingots,  
    Of spice or precious stones,  
But that we have we gathered  
    With sweat and aching bones :  
In flame beneath the tropics,  
    In frost upon the floe,  
And jeopardy of every wind  
    That does between them go.

And some we got by purchase,  
    And some we had by trade,  
And some we found by courtesy  
    Of pike and carronade—  
At midnight, 'mid-sea meetings,  
    For charity to keep,  
And light the rolling homeward-bound  
    That rode a foot too deep.

v

By sport of bitter weather  
    We're walty, strained, and scarred

## THE MERCHANTMEN

From the kentledge on the kelson  
To the slings upon the yard.  
Six occans had their will of us  
To carry all away—  
Our galley 's in the Baltic,  
And our boom 's in Mossel Bay !

We 've floundered off the Texel,  
Awash with sodden deals,  
We 've slipped from Valparaiso  
With the Norther at our heels :  
We 've ratched beyond the Crossets  
That tusk the Southern Pole,  
And dipped our gunnels under  
To the dread Agulhas roll.

Beyond all outer charting  
We sailed where none have sailed,  
And saw the land-lights burning  
On islands none have hailed ;

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Our hair stood up for wonder,  
But, when the night was done,  
There danced the deep to windward  
Blue-empty 'neath the sun !

Strange consorts rode beside us  
And brought us evil luck ;  
The witch-fire climbed our channels,  
And flared on vane and truck :  
Till, through the red tornado,  
That lashed us nigh to blind.  
We saw The Dutchman plunging,  
Full canvas, head to wind !

We 've heard the Midnight Leadsman  
That calls the black deep down—  
Ay, thrice we 've heard The Swimmer,  
The Thing that may not drown.

## THE MERCHANTMEN

On frozen bunt and g. sket  
The sleet-cloud drove her hosts,  
When, manned by more than signed with us  
We passed the Isle o' Ghosts !

And north, amid the hummocks,  
A biscuit-toss below,  
We met the silent shallop  
That frightened whalers know ;  
For, down a crucl ice-lane,  
That opened as he sped,  
We saw dead Henry Hudson  
Steer, North by West, his dead.

So dealt God's waters with us  
Beneath the roaring skies,  
So walked His signs and marvels  
All naked to our eyes :

## THE SEVEN SEAS

But we were heading homeward  
With trade to lose or make—  
Good Lord, they slipped behind us  
In the tailing of our wake !

Let go, let go the anchors ;  
Now shamed at heart are we  
To bring so poor a cargo home  
That had for gift the sea !  
Let go the great bow-anchors—  
Ah, fools were we and blind—  
The worst we stored with utter toil,  
The best we left behind !

*Coastwise—cross-seas—rould the world and back  
again,*  
*Whither flaw shall fail us or the Trades drive down :*  
*Plain-sail—storm-sail—lay your board and tack  
again—*  
*And all to bring a cargo up to London Town !*

## M'ANDREW'S HYMN

L ORD, Thou hast made this world below the  
shadow of a dream,  
An', taught by time, I tak' it so—exceptin'  
always Steam.

From coupler-flange to spindle-guide I see Thy  
Hand, O God—

Predestination in the stride o' yon connectin'-rod.  
John Calvin might ha' forged the same—enor-  
mous, certain, slow—

Ay, wrought it in the furnace-flame—*my* ‘ Insti-  
tutio.’

I cannot get my sleep to-night ; old bones are  
hard to please ;

I 'll stand the middle watch up here—alone wi'  
God an' these

## THE SEVEN SEAS

My engines, after ninety days o' race an' rack an'  
strain

Through all the seas of all Thy world, slam-  
bangin' home again.

Slam-bang too much—they knock a wee—the  
crosshead-gibs are loose ;

But thirty thousand mile o' sea has gied them  
fair excuse. . . .

Fine, clear an' dark—a full-draught breeze, wi  
Ushant out o' sight,

An' Ferguson relievin' Hay. Old girl, ye 'll walk  
to-night !

His wife 's at Plymouth. . . . Seventy—One—  
Two—Three since he began—

Three turns for Mistress Ferguson . . . and  
who 's to blame the man ?

There 's none at any port for me, by drivin' fast  
or slow,

Since Elsie Campbell went to Thee, Lord, thirty  
years ago.

## M'ANDREW'S HYMN

(The year the *Sarah Sands* was burned. Oh  
roads we used to tread,  
Fra' Maryhill to Pollokshaws—fra' Govan to  
Parkhead !)

Not but they're ceevil on the Board. Ye'll  
hear Sir Kenneth say :

' Good morm, M'Andrew ! Back again ? An'  
how's your bilge to-day ? '

Miscallin' technicalties but handin' me my  
chair

To drink Madeira wi' three Earls—the auld Fleet  
Engineer,

That started as a boiler-whelp—when steam and  
he were low.

I mind the time we used to serve a broken pipe  
wi' tow.

Ten pound was all the pressure then—Eh ! Eh !  
—a man wad drive ;

An' here, our workin' gauges give one hunder  
fifty-five !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

We 're creepin' on wi' each new rig—less weight  
an' larger power :

There 'll be the loco-boiler next an' thirty knots  
an hour !

Thirty an' more. What I ha' seen since ocean-  
steam began

Leaves me no doot for the machine : but what  
about the man ?

The man that counts, wi' all his runs, one million  
mile o' sea :

Four time the span from earth to moon. . . .  
How far, O Lord, from Thee ?

That wast beside him night an' day. Ye mind  
my first typhoon ?

It scoughed the skipper on his way to jock wi'  
the saloon.

Three feet were on the stokehold-floor—just  
slappin' to an' fro—

An' cast me on a furnace-door. I have the marks  
to show.

## M' ANDREW'S HYMN

Marks ! I ha' marks o' more than burns—deep  
in my soul an' black,  
An' times like this, when things go smooth, my  
wickudness comes back.  
The sins o' four and forty years, all up an' down  
the seas,  
Clack an' repeat like valves half-fed. . . .  
Forgie's our trespasses.  
Nights when I'd come on deck to mark, wi' envy  
in my gaze,  
The couples kittlin' in the dark between the  
funnel stays ;  
Years when I raked the ports wi' pride to fill my  
cup o' wrong—  
Judge not, O Lord, my steps aside at Gay Street  
in Hong-Kong !  
Blot out the wastrel hours of mine in sin when I  
abode— •  
Jane Harrigan's an' Number Nine, The Reddieck  
an' Grant Road !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

An' waur than all—my crownin' sin—rank  
blasphemy an' wild.

I was not four and twenty then—Ye wadna judge  
a child ?

I 'd seen the Tropics first that run—new fruit,  
new smells, new air—

How could I tell—blind-fou wi' sun—the Deil  
was lurkin' there ?

By day like playhouse-scenes the shore slid past  
our sleepy eyes ;

By night those soft, lasceevious stars leered from  
those vclvet skies,

In port (we used no cargo-steam) I 'd daunder  
down the streets—

An ijjit grinnin' in a dream—for shells an' parra-  
kects,

An' walkin'-sticks o' carved bamboo an' blowfish  
stuffed an' dried— .

Fillin' my bunk wi' rubbishry the Chief put over-  
side.

## M'ANDREW'S HYMN

Till, off Sambawa Hhead, Ye mind, I heard a land-breeze ca',  
Milk-warm wi' breath o' spice an' bloom : ' M'Andrew, come awa' ! '  
Firm, clear an' low—no haste, no hate—the ghostly whisper went,  
Just statin' cevidential facts beyon' all argument :  
' Your mither's God 's a grasin' deil, the shadow o' yoursel',  
' Got out o' books by meenisters clean daft on Heaven an' Hell.  
' They mak' HIm in the Broomielaw, o' Glasgie cold an' dirt,  
' A jealous, pridefu' fetich, lad, that 's only strong to hurt,  
' Ye 'll not go back to Him again an' kiss His red-hot rod,  
' But come wi' Us ' (Now, who were *They* ?) ' an' know the Lcevin' God,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

'That does not kipper souls for sport or break a  
life in jest,

'But swells the ripenin' cocoanuts an' ripes the  
woman's breast.'

An' there it stopped : cut off : no more ; that  
quiet, certain voice—

For me, six months o' twenty four, to leave or  
take at choice.

'Twas on me like a thunderclap—it racked me  
through an' through—

Temptation past the show o' speech, unnameable  
an' new—

The Sin against the Holy Ghost ? . . . An' under  
all, our screw.

That storm blew by but left behind her anchor-  
shiftin' swell,

Thou knowest all my heart an' mind, Thou  
knowest, Lord, I fell.

Third on the *Mary Gloster* then, and first that  
night in Hell !

## M' ANDREW'S HYMN

Yet was Thy hand beneath my head, about my  
feet Thy care—

Fra' Deli clear to Torres Strait, the trial o'  
despair,

But when we touched the Barrier Reef Thy  
answer to my prayer !

We dared not run that sea by night but lay an'  
held our fire,

An' I was drowsin' on the hatch—sick—sick wi'  
doubt an' tire :

' *Better the sight of eyes that see than wanderin' o'*  
*desire !* '

Ye mind that word ? Clear as our gongs—again,  
an' once again,

When rippin' down, through coral-trash ran out  
our moorin'-chain ;

An' by Thy Grace I had the Light to see my duty  
plain.

Light on the engine-room—no more—bright as  
our carbons burn.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

I 've lost it since a thousand times, but never  
past return.

Obsairve. Per annum we'll have here two  
thousand souls aboard—

Think not I dare to justify myself before the  
Lord,

But—average fifteen hunder souls safe-borne fra'  
port to port—

*I am o' service to my kind.* Ye wadna blame  
the thought ?

Maybe they steam from grace to wrath—to sin  
by folly lead,—

It isna mine to judge their path—their lives are  
on my head.

Mine at the last—when all is done it all comes  
back to me,

The fault that leaves six thousand ton a log upon  
the sea.

## M' ANDREW'S HYMN

We'll tak' one stretch—three weeks an' odd by  
any road ye steer—

Fra' Cape Town east to Wellington—ye need an  
engineer.

Fall there—ye 've time to weld your shaft—ay,  
eat it, ere ye 're spoke ;

Or make Kerguelen under sail—three jiggers  
burned wi' smoke !

An' home again, the Rio run : it's no child's  
play to go

Steamin' to bell for fourteen days o' snow an'  
floe an' blow—

The bergs like kelpies overside that gирн an' turn  
an' shift

Whaur, grindin' like the Mills o' God, goes by the  
big South drift.

(Hail, snow an' ice that praise the Lord : I've  
met them at their work,

An' wished we had anither route or they anither  
kirk.)

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Yon 's strain, hard strain, o' head an' hand, for  
though Thy Power brings  
All skill to naught, Ye 'll understand a man must  
think o' things.

Then, at the last, we 'll get to port an' hoist their  
baggage clear—

The passengers, wi' gloves an' canes—an' this is  
what I 'll hear :

' Well, thank ye for a pleasant voyage. The ten-  
der 's comin' now.'

While I go testin' follower-bolts an' watch the  
skipper bow.

They 've words for every one but me—shake  
hands wi' half the crew,

Except the dour Scots engineer, the man they  
never knew.

An' yet I like the wark for all we 've dam' few  
pickin's here—

No pension, an' the most we 'earn 's four hunder  
pound a year.

## M' ANDREW'S HYMN

Better myself abroad ? Maybe. *I'd* sooner  
starve than sail

Wi' such as call a snifter-rod *ross*. . . . French  
for nightingale.

Commeesion on my stores ? Some do ; but I  
can not afford

To he like stewards wi' patty-pans—. I'm older  
than the Board.

A bonus on the coal I save ? Ou ay, the Scots  
are close,

But when I grudge the strength Ye gave I'll  
grudge their food to *those*.

There's bricks that I might recommend — an'  
clink the fire-bars cruel.

No ! Welsh—Wangarti at the worst—an' damn  
all patent fuel !)

Inventions ? Ye must stay in port to mak' a  
patent pay.

My Deeferential Valve-Gear taught me how that  
business lay,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

I blame no chaps wi' clearer head for aught they  
make or sell.

*I found that I could not invent an' look to these  
—as well.*

So, wrestled wi' Apollyon—Nah!—fretted like a  
bairn—

But burned the workin'-plans last run wi' all I  
hoped to earn.

Ye know how hard an Idol dies, an' what that  
meant to me—

E'en tak' it for a sacrifice acceptable to  
Thee. . . .

*Below there! Oiler! What's your wark? Ye  
find it runnin' hard?*

*Ye needn't swill the cap wi' oil—this isn't the  
Cunard!*

*Ye thought? Ye are not paid to think. Go,  
sweat that off again!*

Tek! Tek! It's deeficul't to swear nor tak'  
The Name in vain!

## M'ANDREW'S HYMN

Men, ay an' women, call me stern. Wi' these to  
oversec

Ye'll note I've little time to burn on social  
repartee.

The bairns sec what their elders miss ; they'll  
hunt me to an' fro,

Till for the sake of—well, a kiss—I tak' 'em down  
below.

That minds me of our Viscount loon—Sir Ken-  
neth's kin—the chap

Wi' Russia leather tennis-shoon an' spar-decked  
yachtin'-cap.

I showed him round last week, o'er all—an' at  
the last says he :

‘Mister M'Andrew, don't you think steam spoils  
romance at sea ? ’

Damned ijjit ! I'd been doon that morn to see  
what ailed the throws,

Manholin', on my back—the cranks three inches  
off my nose.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Romance ! Those first-class passengers they  
like it very well,

Printed an' bound in little books ; but why  
don't pocts tell ?

I'm sick of all their quirks an' turns—the loves  
an' doves they dream—

Lord, send a man like Robbie Burns to sing the  
Song o' Steam !

To match wi' Scotia's noblest speech yon orches-  
tra sublime

Whaurto—uplifted like the Just—the tail-rods  
mark the time.

The crank-throws give the double-bass, the feed-  
pump sobs an' heaves,

An' now the main eccentrics start their quarrel  
on the sheaves :

Her time, her own appointed time, the rocking  
hink-head bides,

Till—hear that note ?—the rod's return whings  
glimmerin' through the guides.

## M' ANDREW'S HYMN

They're all awa! True beat, full power, the  
clangin' chorus goes

Clear to the tunnel where they sit, my purrin'  
dynamoes.

Interdependence absolute, foreseen, ordained,  
decreed,

To work, Ye'll note, at any tilt an' every rate o'  
speed.

Fra skylight-lift to furnace-bars, backed, bolted,  
braced an' stayed,

An' singin' like the Mornin' Stars for joy that  
they are made;

While, out o' touch o' vanity, the sweatin' thrust-  
block says :

'Not unto us the praise, or man—not unto us the  
praise!'

Now, a' together, hear them lift their lesson—  
theirs an' mine:

'Law, Orrder, Duty an' Restraint, Obedience,  
Discipline!'

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Mill, forge an' try-pit taught them that when  
roarin' they arose,

An' whiles I wonder if a soul was gien thcm wi'  
the blows.

Oh for a man to weld it then, in one trip-hammer  
strain,

Till even first-class passengers could tell the  
meanin' plain !

But no one cares except mysel' that serve an'  
understand

My seven thousand horse-power here. Eh,  
Lord ! They 're grand—they 're grand !

Uplift am I ? When first in store the new-made  
beasties stood,

Were Ye cast down that breathed the Word  
declarin' all things good ?

Not so ! O' that warld-liftin' joy no after-fall  
could vex,

Ye 've left a glimmer still to cheer the Man—the  
**Arrtifex !**

M' ANDREW'S HYMN

*That holds, in spite o' knock and scale, o' friction,  
waste an' shp,*

*An' by that light—now, mark my word—we 'll  
build the Perfect Ship.*

*I 'll never last to judge her lincs or take her curve  
—not I.*

*But I ha' lived an' I ha' worked. 'Bc thanks to  
Thec, Most High !*

*An' I ha' done what I ha' done—judge Thou if  
ill or well—*

*Always Thy Grace preventin' me. . . .*

*Losh ! Yon 's the 'Stand by ' bell.*

*Pilot so soon ? His flare it is. The mornin'-  
watch is set.*

*Well, God be thanked, as I was sayin', I 'm no  
Pelagian yet.*

*Now I 'll tak' on. . . .*

*'Morrn, Fergusqn. Man, have ye ever thought  
What your good leddy costs in coal? . . . I 'll  
burn 'em down to port.*

## THE MIRACLES

I SENT a message to my dear—  
A thousand leagues and more to Her—  
The dumb sea-levels thrilled to hear,  
And Lost Atlantis bore to Her.

Behind my message hard I came,  
And nigh had found a grave for me :  
But that I launched of steel and flame  
Did war against the wave for me.

Uprose the deep, by gale on gale,  
To bid me change my mind again—  
He broke his teeth along my rail,  
And, roaring, swung behind again.

## THE MIRACLES

I stayed the sun at noon to tell  
My way across the waste of it ;  
I read the storm before it fell  
And made the better haste of it.

Afar, I hailed the land at night—  
The towers I built had heard of me—  
And, ere my rocket reached its height,  
Had flashed my Love the word of me.

Earth sold her chosen men of strength  
(They lived and strove and died for me)  
To drive my road a nation's length  
And toss the miles aside for me.

I snatched their toil to serve my needs—  
Too slow their fleetest flew for me—  
I tired twenty smoking steeds,  
And bade them bait a new for me.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

I sent the lightnings forth to see  
Where hour by hour She waited me.  
Among ten million one was She,  
And surely all men hated me !

Dawn ran to meet me at my goal—  
Ah, day no tongue shall tell again !  
And little folk of little soul  
Rose up to buy and sell again !

## THE NATIVE-BORN

WE 'VE drunk to the Queen—God bless  
her !—

We 've drunk to our mothers' land ;  
We 've drunk to our English brother,  
(But he does not understand) ;  
We 've drunk to the wide creation,  
And the Cross swings low for the morn,  
Last toast, and of obligation,  
A health to the Native-born !

•

They change their skies above them,  
But not their hearts that roam !  
We learned from our wistful mothers  
To call old England ' home ' ;

## THE SEVEN SEAS

We read of the English sky-lark,  
    Of the spring in the English lanes,  
But we screamed with the painted lories  
    As we rode on the dusty plains !

They passed with their old-world legends—  
    Their tales of wrong and dearth—  
Our fathers held by purchase,  
    But we by the right of birth ;  
Our heart 's where they rocked our cradle,  
    Our love where we spent our toil,  
And our faith and our hope and our honour  
    We pledge to our native soil !

I charge you charge your glasses—  
    I charge you drink with me  
To the men of the Four New Nations,  
    And the Islands of the Sea—  
To the last least lump of coral  
    That none may stand outside,

## THE NATIVE-BORN

And our own good pride shall teach us  
To praise our comrade's pride !

To the hush of the breathless morning  
On the thin, tin, crackling roofs,  
To the haze of the burned back-ranges  
And the dust of the shoeless hoofs—  
To the risk of a death by drowning,  
To the risk of a death by drouth—  
To the men of a million acres,  
To the Sons of the Golden South !

*To the Sons of the Golden South (Stand up !),  
And the life we live and know,  
Let a fellow sing o' the little things he cares  
about,  
If a fellow fights for the little things he cares  
about  
With the weight of a single blow !*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

To the smoke of a hundred coasters,  
To the sheep on a thousand hills,  
To the sun that never blisters,  
To the rain that never chills—  
To the land of the waiting springtime,  
To our five-meal, meat-fed men,  
To the tall, deep-bosomed women,  
And the children nine and ten !

*And the children nine and ten (Stand up !),  
And the life we live and know,  
Let a fellow sing o' the little things he cares about,  
If a fellow fights for the little things he cares  
about  
With the weight of a two-fold blow !*

To the far-flung fenceless prairie  
Where the quick cloud-shadows trail,  
To our neighbour's barn in the offing  
And the line of the new-cut rail ;

## THE NATIVE-BORN

To the plough in her league-long furrow  
With the grey Lake gulls behind—  
To the weight of a half-year's winter  
And the warm wet western wind !

To the home of the floods and thunder,  
To her pale dry healing blue—  
To the lift of the great Cape combers,  
And the smell of the baked Karroo.  
To the growl of the sluicing stamp-head—  
To the reef and the water-gold,  
To the last and the largest Empire,  
To the map that is half unrolled !

To our dear dark foster-mothers,  
To the heathen songs they sung—  
To the heathen speech we babbled  
Ere we came to the white man's tongue.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

To the cool of our deep verandas—  
To the blaze of our jewelled main,  
To the night, to the palms in the moonlight,  
And the fire-fly in the cane !

To the hearth of our people's people—  
To her well-ploughed windy sea,  
To the hush of our dread high-altar  
Where The Abbey makes us We ;  
To the grist of the slow-ground ages,  
To the gain that is yours and mine—  
To the Bank of the Open Credit,  
To the Power-house of the Line !

We 've drunk to the Queen—God bless  
her !—  
We 've drunk to our mothers' land ;  
We 've drunk to our English brother  
(And we hope he 'll understand).

## THE NATIVE-BORN

We 've drunk as much as we 're able,  
And the Cross swings low for the morn ;  
Last toast—and your foot on the table !—  
A health to the Native-born !

*A health to the Native-born (Stand up !),*  
*We 're six white men arow,*  
*All bound to sing o' the little things we care about,*  
*All bound to fight for the little things we care about*  
*With the weight of a six-fold blow !*  
*By the might of our cable-tow (Take hands !),*  
*From the Orkneys to the Horn,*  
*All round the world (and a little loop to pull it by),*  
*All round the world (and a little strap to buckle it),*  
*A health to the Native-born !*

## THE KING

‘ FAREWELL, Romance ! ’ the Cave-men  
said ;

‘ With bone well carved he went away,  
Flint arms the ignoble arrowhead,  
And jasper tips the spear to-day.  
Changed are the Gods of Hunt and Dance,  
And he with these. Farewell, Romance ! ’

‘ Farewell, Romance ! ’ the Lake-folk sighed ;  
‘ We lift the weight of flatling years ;  
The caverns of the mountain-side  
Hold him who scorns our huttred piers.  
Lost hills whereby we dare not dwell,  
Guard ye his rest. Romance, farewell ! ’

## THE KING

‘ Farewell, Romance ! ’ the Soldier spoke ;  
    ‘ By sleight of sword we may not win,  
But scuffle ’mid uncleanly smoke  
    Of arquebus and culverin.  
Honour is lost, and none may tell  
Who paid good blows. Romance, farewell ! ’

‘ Farewell, Romance ! ’ the Traders cried ;  
    ‘ Our keels ha’ lain with every sea ;  
The dull-returning wind and tide  
    Heave up the wharf where we would be ;  
The known and noted breezes swell  
Our trudging sail. Romance, farewell ! ’

‘ Good-bye, Romance ! ’ the Skipper said ;  
    ‘ He vanished with the coal we burn ;  
Our dial marks full steam ahead,  
    Our speed is timed to half a turn.  
Sure as the ferried barge we ply  
‘ Twixt port and port. Romance, good-bye ! ’

## THE SEVEN SEAS

'Romance ! ' the season-tickets mourn,  
'*He* never ran to catch his train,  
But passed with coach and guard and horn—  
And left the local—late again ! '  
Confound Romance ! . . . And all unseen  
Romance brought up the nine-fifteen.

His hand was on the lever laid,  
His oil-can soothed the worrying cranks,  
His whistle waked the snowbound grade,  
His fog-horn cut the reeking Banks ;  
By dock and deep and mine and mill  
The Boy-god reckless laboured still !

Robed, crowned and throned, he wove his spell,  
Where heart-blood beat or hearth-smoke curled,  
With unconsidered miracle,  
Hedged in a backward-gazing world :  
Then taught his chosen bard to say :  
' Our King was with us—yesterday ! '

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

*A*WAY by the lands of the Japanee  
Where the paper lanterns glow,  
And the crews of all the shipping drink  
In the house of Blood Street Joe,  
At twilight, when the landward breeze  
Brings up the harbour noise,  
And ebb of Yokohama Bay  
Swigs chattering through the buoys,  
In Cisco's Dewdrop Dining Rooms  
They tell the tale anew  
Of a hidden sea and a hidden fight,  
When the Baltic ran from the Northern Light  
And the Stralsund fought the two.

Now this is the Law of the Muscovite, that he  
proves with shot and steel,  
When ye come by his isles in the Smoky Sea ye  
must not take the seal,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Where the grey sea goes nakedly between the  
weed-hung shelves,  
And the little blue fox he is bred for his skin and  
the seal they breed for themselves ;  
For when the *matkas* seek the shore to drop their  
pups aland,  
The great man-seal haul out of the sea, aroaring,  
band by band ;  
And when the first September gales have slaked  
their rutting-wrath,  
The great man-seal haul back to the sea and no  
man knows their path.  
Then dark they lie and stark they lie—rookery,  
dune, and floe,  
And the Northern Lights come down o' nights to  
dance with the houseless snow ;  
And God Who clears the grounding berg and  
steers the grinding floe,  
He hears the cry of the little kit-fox and the  
wind along the snow.

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

But since our women must walk gay and money  
buys their gear,

The scaling-boats they filch that way at hazard  
year by year.

English they be and Japanee that hang on the  
Brown Bear's flank,

And some be Scot, but the worst of the lot, and  
the boldest thieves, be Yank !

It was the sealer *Northern Light*, to the Smoky  
Seas she bore,

With a stovepipe stuck from a starboard port and  
the Russian flag at her fore.

(*Baltic*, *Stralsund*, and *Northern Light*—oh ! they  
were birds of a feather—

Shipping away to the Smoky Seas, three seal-  
thieves together !)

And at last she came to a sandy cove and the  
*Baltic* lay therein,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

But her men were up with the herding scal to  
drive and club and skin.

There were fifteen hundred skins abeach, cool  
pelt and proper fur,

When the *Northern Light* drove into the bight  
and the sea-mist drove with her.

The *Baltic* called her men and weighed—she  
could not choose but run—

For a stovepipe seen through the closing mist, it  
shows like a four-inch gun

(And loss it is that is sad as death to lose both  
trip and ship

And lie for a rotting contraband on Vladivostock  
slip).

She turned and dived in the sea-smother as a  
rabbit dives in the whins,

And the *Northern Light* sent up her boats to steal  
the stolen skins.

They had not brought a load to side or slid their  
hatches clear,

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

When they were aware of a sloop-of-war, ghost  
white and very near.

Her flag she showed, and her guns she showed—  
thrice of them, black, abeam,  
And a funnel white with the crusted salt, but  
never a show of steam.

There was no time to man the brakes, they  
knocked the shackle free,  
And the *Northern Light* stood out again, goose-  
winged to open sea.

(For life it is that is worse than death, by force  
of Russian law

To work in the mines of mercury that loose the  
teeth in your jaw.)

They had not run a mile from shore—they heard  
no shots behind—

When the skipper smote his hand on his thigh  
and threw her up in the wind :

## THE SEVEN SEAS

- ‘ Bluffed—raised out on a bluff,’ said he, ‘ for if  
my name’s Tom Hall,
- ‘ You must set a thief to catch a thief—and a  
thief has caught us all !
- ‘ By every butt in Oregon and every spar in  
Maine,
- ‘ The hand that spilled the wind from her sail  
was the hand of Reuben Paine !
- ‘ He has rigged and trigged her with paint and  
spar, and, faith, he has faked her well—
- ‘ But I’d know the *Stralsund’s* deckhouse yet  
from here to the booms o’ Hell.
- ‘ Oh, once we ha’ met at Baltimore, and twice on  
Boston pier,
- ‘ But the sickest day for you, Reuben Paine, was  
the day that you came here—
- ‘ The day that you came here, my lad, to scare  
us from our seal
- ‘ With your funnel made o’ your painted cloth,  
and your guns o’ rotten deal !

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

‘ Ring and blow for the *Baltic* now, and head her  
back to the bay,  
‘ And we ’ll come into the game again—with a  
double deck to play ! ’

They rang and blew the sealers’ call—the poaching cry of the sea—

And they raised the *Baltic* out of the mist, and  
an angry ship was she :

And blind they groped through the whirling  
white and blind to the bay again,

Till they heard the creak of the *Stralsund*’s boom  
and the clank of her mooring chain.

They laid them down by bitt and boat, their  
pistols in their belts,

And : ‘ Will you fight for it, Reuben Paine, or  
will you share the pelts ? ’

A dog-toothed laugh laughed Reuben Paine, and  
bared his fletching-knife.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

‘ Yea, skin for skin, and all that he hath a man  
will give for his life ;  
But I ’ve six thousand skins below, and Yeddo  
Port to see,  
And there ’s never a law of God or man runs  
north of Fifty-Three :  
So go in peace to the naked seas with empty holds  
to fill,  
And I ’ll be good to your seal this catch, as many  
as I shall kill ! ’

Answered the snap of a closing lock and the jar  
of a gun-butt slid,  
But the tender fog shut fold on fold to hide the  
wrong they did.  
The weeping fog rolled fold on fold the wrath of  
man to cloak,  
And the flame-spurts pale ran down the rail as  
the sealing-rifles spoke.

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

The bullets bit on bend and butt, the splinter  
slivered free

(Little they trust to sparrow-dust that stop the  
seal in his sea !),

The thick smoke hung and would not shift, leaden  
it lay and blue,

But three were down on the *Baltic's* deck and two  
of the *Stralsund's* crew.

An arm's length out and overside the banked  
fog held them bound,

But, as they heard or groan or word, they firèd  
at the sound.

For one cried out on the Name of God, and one to  
have him cease,

And the questing volley found them both and  
bade them hold their peace ;

And one called out on a heathen joss and one on  
the Virgin's Name,

And the schooling bullet leaped across and  
showed them whence they came.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

And in the waiting silences the rudder whined  
beneath,

And each man drew his watchful breath slow  
taken 'tween the teeth—

Trigger and ear and eye acock, knit brow and  
hard-drawn lips—

Bracing his feet by chock and cleat for the rolling  
of the ships.

Till they heard the cough of a wounded man  
that fought in the fog for breath,

Till they heard the torment of Reuben Paine that  
wailed upon his death :

‘The tides they ’ll go through Fundy Race but  
I ’ll go never more

‘ And see the hogs from ebb-tide mark turn  
scampering back to shore.

‘ No more I ’ll see the trawlers drift below the  
Bass Rock ground,

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

- ‘ Or watch the tall Fall steamer lights tear blazing  
    up the Sound.
- ‘ Sorrow is me, in a lonely sea and a sinful fight  
    I fall,
- ‘ But if there ’s law o’ God or man you ’ll swing  
    for it yet, Tom Hall ! ’

Tom Hall stood up by the quarter-rail. ‘ Your words in your teeth,’ said he.

‘ There ’s never a law of God or man runs north of Fifty-Three.

‘ So go in grace with Him to face, and an ill-spent life behind,

‘ And I ’ll be good to your widows, Rube, as many as I shall find.’

A *Stralsund* man shot blind and large, and a warlock Finn was he,

And he hit Tom Hall with a bursting ball a hand’s-breadth over the knee.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Tom Hall caught hold by the topping-lift, and  
sat him down with an oath,  
' You 'll wait a little, Rube,' he said, ' the Devil  
has called for both.  
' The Devil is driving both this tide, and the kill-  
ing-grounds are close,  
' And we 'll go up to the Wrath of God as the  
holluschickie goes.  
' O men, put back your guns again and lay your  
rifles by,  
' We 've fought our fight, and the best are down.  
Let up and let us die !  
' Quit firing, by the bow there—quit ! Call off  
the *Baltic's* crew !  
' You 're sure of Hell as me or Rube—but wait  
till we get through.'

There went no word between the ships, but thick  
and quick and loud  
The life-blood drummed on the dripping decks,  
with the fog-dew from the shroud,

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

The sea-pull drew them side by side, gunnel to  
gunnel laid,  
And they felt the sheerstrakes pound and clear,  
but never a word was said.

Then Reuben Paine cried out again before his  
spirit passed :

‘ Have I followed the sea for thirty years to die  
in the dark at last ?  
‘ Curse on her work that has nipped me here with  
a shifty trick unkind—  
‘ I have gotten my death where I got my bread,  
but I dare not face it blnd.  
‘ Curse on the fog ! Is there never a wind of all  
the winds I knew  
‘ To clear the smother from off my chest, and let  
me look at the blue ? ’

The good fog heard—like a splitten sail, to left  
and right she tore,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

And they saw the sun-dogs in the haze and the  
seal upon the shore.

Silver and grey ran spit and bay to meet the steel-  
backed tide,

And pinched and white in the clearing light the  
crews stared overside.

O rainbow-gay the red pools lay that swilled and  
spilled and spread,

And gold, raw gold, the spent shell rolled between  
the careless dead—

The dead that rocked so drunkenwise to weather  
and to lee,

And they saw the work their hands had done as  
God had bade them see.

And a little breeze blew over the rail that made  
the headsails lift,

But no man stood by wheel or sheet, and they  
let the schooners drift.

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

And the rattle rose in Reuben's throat and he  
cast his soul with a cry,  
And 'Gone already?' Tom Hall he said. 'Then  
it's time for me to die.'  
His eyes were heavy with great sleep and yearn-  
ing for the land,  
And he spoke as a man that talks in dreams, his  
wound beneath his hand.

'Oh, there comes no good o' the westering wind  
that backs against the sun ;  
'Wash down the decks—they're all too red—and  
share the skins and run,  
'Baltic, Stralsund, and Northern Light—clean  
share and share for all,  
'You'll find the fleets off Tolstoi Mees, but you  
will not find Tom Hall.  
'Evil he did in shoal-water and blacker sin on  
the deep,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

- ‘ But now he ’s sick of watch and trick and now  
    he ’ll turn and sleep.
- ‘ He ’ll have no more of the crawling sea that  
    made him suffer so,
- ‘ But he ’ll lie down on the killing-grounds where  
    the holluschickie go.
- ‘ And west you ’ll sail and south again, beyond  
    the sea-fog’s rim,
- ‘ And tell the Yoshiwara girls to burn a stick for  
    him.
- ‘ And you ’ll not weight him by the heels and  
    dump him overside,
- ‘ But carry him up to the sand-hollows to die as  
    Bering died,
- ‘ And make a place for Reuben Paine that knows  
    the fight was fair,
- ‘ And leave the two that did the wrong to talk it  
    over there ! ’

## THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS

*Half-steam ahead by guess and lead, for the sun is  
mostly veiled—  
Through fog to fog, by luck and log, sail ye as Bering  
sailed ;  
And if the light shall lift aright to give your landfall  
plain,  
North and by west, from Zapne Crest, ye raise the  
Crosses Twain.  
Fair marks are they to the inner bay, the reckless  
poacher knows  
What time the scarred see-catchie lead their sleek  
seraglios.  
Ever they hear the floe-pack clear, and the blast of  
the old bull-whale,  
And the deep seal-roar that beats off-shore above  
the loudest gale.  
Ever they wait the winter's hate as the thundering  
boorga calls,.  
Where northward look they to St. George, and west-  
ward to St. Paul's.*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

*Ever they greet the hunted fleet—lone keels off head-  
lands drear—*

*When the sealing-schooners fit that way at hazard  
year by year.*

*Ever in Yokohama port men tell the tale anew  
Of a hidden sea and a hidden fight,*

*When the Baltic ran from the Northern Light  
And the Stralsund fought the two.*

## THE DERELICT

*'And reports the derelict Mary Pollock still at sea.'*

SHIPPING NEWS.

*I WAS the staunchest of our fleet  
Till the sea rose beneath our feet  
Unheralded, in hatred past all measure.  
Into his pits he stamped my crew,  
Buffeted, blinded, bound and threw,  
Bidding me eyeless wait upon his pleasure.*

Man made me, and my will  
Is to my maker still,  
Whom now the currents con, the rollers steer—  
Lifting forlorn to spy  
Trailed smoke along the sky,  
Falling afraid lest any keel come near !

Wrenched as the lips of thirst,  
Wried, dried, and split and burst,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Bone-bleached my decks, wind-scoured to the  
graining ;  
And jarred at every roll  
The gear that was my soul  
Answers the anguish of my beams' complaining.

For life that crammed me full,  
Gangs of the prying gull  
That shriek and scrabble on the riven hatches !  
For roar that dumbed the gale,  
My hawse-pipes' guttering wail,  
Sobbing my heart out through the uncounted  
watches !

Blind in the hot blue ring  
Through all my points I swing—  
Swing and return to shift the sun anew.  
Blind in my well-known sky  
I hear the stars go by,  
Mocking the prow that can not hold one true !

## THE DERELICT

White on my wasted path  
Wave after wave in wrath  
Frets 'gainst his fellow, warring where to send me.  
Flung forward, heaved aside,  
Witless and dazed I bide  
The mercy of the comber that shall end me.

North where the bergs careen,  
The spray of seas unseen  
Smokes round my head and freezes in the falling ;  
South where the corals breed,  
The footless, floating weed  
Folds me and fouls me, strake on strake up-  
crawling.

I that was clean to run  
My race against the sun—  
Strength on the deep, am bawd to all disaster—  
Whipped forth by night to meet  
My sister's careless feet,  
And with a kiss betray her to my master !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Man made me, and my will  
Is to my maker still—  
To him and his, our peoples at their pier :  
Lifting in hope to spy  
Trailed smoke along the sky,  
Falling afraid lest any keel come near !

## THE ANSWER

A ROSE, in tatters on the garden path,  
Cried out to God and murmured 'gainst  
His Wrath,  
Because a sudden wind at twilight's hush  
Had snapped her stem alone of all the bush.  
And God, Who hears both sun-dried dust and  
sun,  
Had pity, whispering to that luckless one.  
' Sister, in that thou sayest We did not well—  
What voices heardst thou when thy petals fell ? '  
And the Rose answered, ' In that evil hour  
A voice said, " Father, wherefore falls the flower ?  
For lo, the very gossamers are still."  
And a voice answered, " Son, by Allah's will ! " '

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Then softly as a rain-mist on the sward  
Came to the Rose the Answer of the Lord :  
‘ Sister, before We smote the dark in twain,  
Ere yet the stars saw one another plain,  
Time, Tide, and Space, We bound unto the task  
That thou shouldst fall, and such an one should  
ask.’

Whereat the withered flower, all content,  
Died as they die whose days are innocent ;  
While he who questioned why the flower fell  
Caught hold of God and saved his soul from Hell.

## THE SONG OF THE BANJO

YOU couldn't pack a Broadwood half a mile—

You mustn't leave a fiddle in the damp—

You couldn't raft an organ up the Nile,

And play it in an Equatorial swamp.

I travel with the cooking-pots and pails—

I'm sandwiched 'tween the coffee and the  
pork—

And when the dusty column checks and tails,

You should hear me spur the rearguard to a  
walk !

With my '*Pilly-willy-winky-winky popp !*'

[Oh, it's any tune that comes into my  
head !]

So I keep 'em moving forward till they drop ;

So I play 'em up to water and to bed.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

In the silence of the camp before the fight,  
When it's good to make your will and say  
your prayer,

You can hear my *strumpty-tumpty* overnight  
Explaining ten to one was always fair.

I'm the Prophet of the Utterly Absurd,  
Of the Patently Impossible and Vain—  
And when the Thing that Couldn't has occurred,

Give me time to change my leg and go again.

With my ' *Tumpa-tumpa-tumpa-tum-pa tump !*'

In the desert where the dung-fed camp-smoke curled

There was never voice before us till I led our lonely chorus,

I—the war-drum of the White Man round the world !

## THE SONG OF THE BANJO

By the bitter road the Younger Son must tread,  
Ere he win to hearth and saddle of his own,—  
'Mid the riot of the shearers at the shed,  
In the silence of the herder's hut alone—  
In the twilight, on a bucket upside down,  
Hear me babble what the weakest won't confess—  
  
I am Memory and Torment—I am Town !  
I am all that ever went with evening dress !

With my '*Tunk-a tunka-tunka-tunka-tunk !*'  
[So the lights—the London Lights—grow  
near and plain !]  
So I rowel 'em afresh towards the Devil and  
the Flesh,  
Till I bring my broken rankers home again.

In desire of many marvels over sea,  
Where the new-raised tropic city sweats and  
roars,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

I have sailed with Young Ulysses from the quay  
Till the anchor rumbled down on stranger shores.  
He is blooded to the open and the sky,  
He is taken in a snare that shall not fail,  
He shall hear me singing strongly, till he die,  
Like the shouting of a backstay in a gale.

With my '*Hya ! Heeya ! Heeya ! Hullah ! Haul !*'

[O the green that thunders aft along the deck !]

Are you sick o' towns and men ? You must sign and sail again,  
For it 's 'Johnny Bowlegs, pack your kit and trek !'

Through the gorge that gives the stars at noon-day clear—

Up the pass that packs the scud beneath our wheel—

## THE SONG OF THE BANJO

Round the bluff that sinks her thousand fathom  
sheer—

Down the valley with our guttering brakes  
asqucal :

Where the trestle groans and quivers in the snow,  
Where the many-shedded levels loop and twine,  
So I lead my reckless children from below  
Till we sing the Song of Roland to the pine.

With my '*Tinka-tinka-tinka-tinka-tink!*'

[And the axe has cleared the mountain,  
croup and crest !]

So we ride the iron stallions down to drink,  
Through the cañons to the waters of the  
West !

And the tunes that mean so much to you  
alone—

Common tunes that make you choke and blow  
your nose,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Vulgar tunes that bring the laugh that brings  
the groan—

I can rip your very heartstrings out with those ;  
With the feasting, and the folly, and the fun—  
And the lying, and the lusting, and the drink,  
And the merry play that drops you, when you 're  
done,

To the thoughts that burn like irons if you  
think.

With my '*Plunka-lunka-lunka-lunka-lunk !*'

Here's a trifle on account of pleasure  
past,

Ere the wit that made you win gives you  
eyes to see your sin

And the heavier repentance at the last !

Let the organ moan her sorrow to the roof—

I have told the naked stars the Grief of  
Man !

## THE SONG OF THE BANJO

Let the trumpets snare the foeman to the proof—  
I have known Defeat, and mocked it as we  
ran !

My bray ye may not alter nor mistake  
When I stand to jeer the fatted Soul of  
Things,

But the Song of Lost Endcavour that I  
make,

Is it hidden in the twanging of the strings ?

With my ‘ *Ta-ra-rara-rara-ra-ra-rrrp !* ’

[Is it naught to you that hear and pass me  
by ?]

But the word—the word is mine, when the  
order moves the line

And the lean, locked ranks go roaring  
down to die.

The grandam of my grandam was the Lyre—  
[O the blue below the little fisher-huts !]

## THE SEVEN SEAS

That the Stealer stooping beachward filled with  
fire,

Till she bore my iron head and ringing guts !  
By the wisdom of the centuries I speak—

To the tune of yestermorn I set the truth—  
I, the joy of life unquestioned—I, the Greek—  
I, the everlasting Wonder Song of Youth !

With my '*Tinka-tinka-tinka-tinka-tink !*'  
[What d'ye lack, my noble masters ?  
    What d'ye lack ?]  
So I draw the world together link by link :  
Yea, from Delos up to Limerick and back !

## THE LINER SHE'S A LADY

THE Liner she's a lady, an' she never looks  
nor 'eeds—

The Man-o'-War's 'er 'usband, an' 'e gives 'er  
all she needs ;

But, oh, the little cargo-boats, that sail the wet  
seas roun',

They 're just the same as you an' me a-plyin' up  
an' down !

*Plyin' up an' down, Jenny, 'angin' round the  
Yard,*

*All the way by Fratton tram down to Portsmouth  
'Ard;*

*Anythin' for business, an' we're growin' old—  
Plyin' up an' down, Jenny, waitin' in the cold !*

## THE SEVEN SEAS

The Liner she 's a lady by the paint upon 'er face,  
An' if she meets an accident they count it sore  
disgrace :

The Man-o'-War 's 'er 'usband, and 'e 's always  
'andy by,

But, oh, the little cargo-boats ! they 've got to  
load or die.

The Liner she 's a lady, and 'er route is cut an'  
dried ;

The Man-o'-War 's 'er 'usband, an' 'e always  
keeps beside ;

But, oh, the little cargo-boats that 'aven't any  
man,

They 've got to do their business first, and make  
the most they can !

The Liner she 's a lady, and if a war should come,  
The Man-o'-War 's 'er 'usband, and 'e 'd bid 'er  
stay at home ;

## THE LINER SHE'S A LADY

But, oh, the little cargo-boats that fill with every tide !

'E 'd 'ave to up an' fight for them, for they are England's pride.

The Liner she 's a lady, but if she wasn't made,  
There still would be the cargo-boats for 'ome an'  
foreign trade.

The Man-o'-War 's 'er 'usband, but if we wasn't  
'ere,

'E wouldn't have to fight at all for 'ome an'  
friends so dear.

*'Ome an' friends so dear, Jenny, 'angin' round  
the Yard,*

*All the way by Fratton tram down to Portsmouth  
'Ard;*

*Anythin' for business, an' we 're growin' old—*

*'Ome an' friends so dear, Jenny, waitin' in the  
cold !*

## MULHOLLAND'S CONTRACT

THE fear was on the cattle, for the gale was  
on the sea,

An' the pens broke up on the lower deck an' let  
the creatures free—

An' the lights went out on the lower deck, an' no  
one near but me.

I had been singin' to them to keep 'em quiet  
there,

For the lower deck is the dangerousest, requirin'  
constant care,

An' give to me as the strongest man, though used  
to drink and swear.

I see my chance was certain of bein' horned or  
trod,

## MULHOLLAND'S CONTRACT

For the lower deck was packed with steers  
thicker 'n peas in a pod,  
An' more pens broke at every roll—so I made a  
Contract with God.

An' by the terms of the Contract, as I have read  
the same,  
If He got me to port alive I would exalt His Name,  
An' praise His Holy Majesty till further orders  
came.

He saved me from the cattle an' He saved me  
from the sea,  
For they found me 'tween two drownded ones  
where the roll had landed me—  
An' a four-inch crack on top of my head, as crazy  
as could be.

But that were done by a stanchion, an' not by  
a bullock at all,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

An' I lay still for seven weeks convalessing of the fall,

An' readin' the shiny Scripture texts in the Seaman's Hospital.

An' I spoke to God of our Contract, an' He says to my prayer :

' I never puts on My ministers no more than they can bear.

' So back you go to the cattle-boats an' preach My Gospel there.

' For human life is chancy at any kind of trade,

' But most of all, as well you know, when the steers are mad-afraid ;

' So you go back to the cattle-boats an' preach 'em as I 've said.

' They must quit drinkin' an' swearin', they mustn't knife on a blow,

## MULHOLLAND'S CONTRACT

'They must quit gamblin' their wages, and you  
must preach it so ;  
'For now those boats are more like Hell than  
anything else I know.'

I didn't want to do it, for I knew what I should  
get,

An' I wanted to preach Religion, handsome an'  
out of the wct,

But the Word of the Lord were lain on me, an'  
I done what I was set.

I have been smit an' bruised, as warned would  
be the case,

An' turned my cheek to the smiter exactly as  
Scripture says ;

But following that, I knocked him down an' led  
him up to Grace.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

An' we have preaching on Sundays whenever the  
sea is calm,

An' I use no knife or pistol an' I never take no  
harm,

For the Lord abideth back of me to guide my  
fighting arm.

An' I sign for four-pound-ten a month and save  
the money clear,

An' I am in charge of the lower deck, an' I never  
lose a steer ;

An' I believe in Almighty God an' preach His  
Gospel here.

The skippers say I 'm crazy, but I can prove 'em  
wrong,

For I am in charge of the lower deck with all that  
doth belong—

*Which they would not give to a lunatic, and the  
competition so strong !*

## ANCHOR SONG

(*From 'Many Inventions'*)

H EH ! Walk her round. Heave, ah heave  
her short again !

Over, snatch her over, there, and hold her on  
the pawl.

Loose all sail, and brace your yards back and  
full—

Ready jib to pay her off and heave short all !

Well, ah fare you well ; we can stay no more  
with you, my love—

Down, set down your liquor and your girl  
from off your knee ;

For the wind has come to say :

' You must take me while you may,

## THE SEVEN SEAS

If you 'd go to Mother Carey  
(Walk her down to Mother Carey !),  
Oh, we 're bound to Mother Carey where she  
feeds her chicks at sea ! '

Heh ! Walk her round. Break, ah break it out  
o' that !

Break our starboard-bower out, apeak, awash,  
and clear.

Port—port she casts, with the harbour-mud  
beneath her foot,

And that 's the last o' bottom we shall see this  
year !

Well, ah fare you well, for we 've got to take  
her out again—

Take her out in ballast, riding light and  
cargo-free.

## ANCHOR SONG

And it 's time to clear and quit  
When the hawser grips the bitt,  
So we 'll pay you with the foresheet and a  
promise from the sea !

Heh ! Tally on. Aft and walk away with her !  
Handsome to the cathead, now ; O tally on  
the fall !  
Stop, seize and fish, and easy on the davit-guy.  
Up, well up the fluke of her, and inboard  
haul !

Well, ah fare you well, for the Channel wind 's  
took hold of us,  
Choking down our voices as we snatch the  
gaskets free.  
And it 's blowing up for night,  
And she 's dropping light on light,  
And she 's snorting under bonnets for a  
breath of open sea.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Wheel, full and by ; but she 'll smell her road  
alone to-night.

Sick she is and harbour-sick—O sick to clear the  
land !

Roll down to Brest with the old Red Ensign over  
us—

Carry on and thrash her out with all she 'll  
stand !

Well, ah fare you well, and it 's Ushant slams  
the door on us,

Whirling like a windmill through the dirty  
scud to lec :

Till the last, last flicker goes  
From the tumbling water-rows,

And we 're off to Mother Carey  
(Walk her down to Mother Carey !),

Oh, we 're bound for Mother Carey where she  
feeds her chicks at sea !

## THE LOST LEGION

THERE 'S a Legion that never was 'listed,  
That carries no colours or crest,  
But, split in a thousand detachments,  
Is breaking the road for the rest.  
Our fathers they left us their blessing—  
They taught us, and groomed us, and  
crammed ;  
But we 've shaken the Clubs and the Messes  
To go and find out and be damned  
(Dear boys !),  
To go and get shot and be damned.

So some of us chivy the slaver,  
And some of us cherish the black,  
And some of us hunt on the Oil Coast,  
And some on—the Wallaby track :

## THE SEVEN SEAS

The ends o' the Earth were our portion,  
The ocean at large was our share.

## THE LOST LEGION

There was never a skirmish to windward  
But the Leaderless Legion was there :  
Yes, somehow and somewhere and always  
We were first when the trouble began,  
From a lottery-row in Manila,  
To an I.D.B. race on the Pan  
(Dear boys !  
With the Mounted Police on the Pan.

We preach in advance of the Army,  
We skirmish ahead of the Church,  
With never a gunboat to help us  
When we're scuppered and left in the  
lurch.  
But we know as the cartridges finish,  
And we're filed on our last little shelves,  
That the Legion that never was 'listed  
Will send us as good as ourselves  
(Good men !),  
Five hundred as good as ourselves.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Then a health (we must drink it in whispers)  
To our wholly unauthorised horde—  
To the line of our dusty forcloopers,  
The Gentlemen Rovers abroad—  
Yes, a health to ourselves ere we scatter,  
For the steamer won't wait for the train,  
And the Legion that never was 'listed  
Goes back into quarters again !

'Regards !

Goes back under canvas again.

Hurrah !

The swag and the billy again.

Here's how !

The trail and the packhorse again.

• Salve !

The trek and the lager again.

## THE SEA-WIFE

THERE dwells a wife by the Northern Gate,  
And a wealthy wife is she ;  
She breeds a breed o' rovin' men  
And casts them over sea.

And some are drowned in deep water,  
And some in sight o' shore,  
And word goes back to the weary wife  
And ever she sends more.

For since that wife had gate or gear,  
Or hearth or garth or bield,  
She willed her sons to the white harvest,  
And that is a bitter yield.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

She wills her sons to the wet ploughing,  
To ride the horse of tree,  
And syne her sons come back again  
Far-spent from out the sea.

The good wife's sons come home again  
With little into their hands,  
But the lore of men that ha' dealt with men  
In the new and naked lands ;

But the faith of men that ha' brothered men  
By more than easy breath,  
And the eyes o' men that ha' read wi' men  
In the open books of death.

Rich are they, rich in wonders seen,  
But poor in the goods o' men ;  
So what they ha' got by the skin o' their teeth  
They sell for their teeth again.

## THE SEA-WIFE

For whether they lose to the naked life  
Or win to their hearts' desire,  
They tell it all to the weary wife  
That nods beside the fire.

Her hearth is wide to every wind  
That makes the white ash spin ;  
And tide and tide and 'tween the tides  
Her sons go out and in ;

(Out with great mirth that do desire  
Hazard of trackless ways,  
In with content to wait their watch  
And warm before the blaze) ;

And some return by failing light,  
And some in waking dream,  
For she hears the heels of the dripping ghosts  
That ride the rough roof-beam.

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Home, they come home from all the ports,  
The living and the dead ;  
The good wife's sons come home again  
**For her blessing on their head !**

## HYMN BEFORE ACTION

THE earth is full of anger,  
The seas are dark with wrath,  
The Nations in their harness  
    Go up against our path :  
Ere yet we loose the legions—  
    Ere yet we draw the blade,  
Jehovah of the Thunders,  
    Lord God of Battles, aid !

High lust and foward bearing,  
Proud heart, rebellious brow—  
Deaf ear and soul uncaring,  
    We seek Thy mercy now !  
The sinner that forswore Thee,  
The fool that passed Thee by,  
Our times are known before Thee—  
    Lord, grant us strength to die !

## THE SEVEN SEAS

For those who kneel beside us  
At altars not Thine own,  
Who lack the lights that guide us,  
Lord, let their faith atone.  
If wrong we did to call them,  
By honour bound they came ;  
Let not Thy Wrath befall them,  
But deal to us the blame.

From panic, pride, and terror,  
Revenge that knows no rein,  
Light haste and lawless error,  
Protect us yet again.  
Cloak Thou our undeserving,  
Make firm the shuddering breath,  
In silence and unswerving  
To taste Thy lesser death !

Ah, Mary pierced with sorrow,  
Remember, reach and save

## HYMN BEFORE ACTION

The soul that comes to-morrow  
Before the God that gave !  
Since each was born of woman,  
For each at utter need—  
True comrade and true foeman—  
Madonna, intercede !

E'en now their vanguard gathers,  
E'en now we face the fray—  
As Thou didst help our fathers,  
Help Thou our host to-day !  
Fulfilled of signs and wonders,  
In life, in death made clear—  
Jehovah of the Thunders,  
**Lord God of Battles, hear !**

## TO THE TRUE ROMANCE

(From 'Many Inventions')

*T*HY face is far from this our war,  
Our call and counter-cry,  
*I* shall not find Thee quick and kind,  
Nor know Thee till I die.  
Enough for me in dreams to see  
And touch Thy garments' hem :  
Thy feet have trod so near to God  
*I* may not follow them.

Through wantonness if men profess  
They weary of Thy parts,  
E'en let them die at blasphemy  
And perish with their arts ;

## TO THE TRUE ROMANCE

But we that love, but we that prove  
Thine excellence august,  
While we adore discover more  
Thee perfect, wise, and just.

Since spoken word Man's Spirit stirred  
Beyond his belly-need,  
What is is Thine of fair design  
In thought and craft and deed ;  
Each stroke aright of toil and fight,  
That was and that shall be,  
And hope too high, wherefore we die,  
Has birth and worth in Thee.

Who holds by Thee hath Heaven in fee  
To gild his dross thereby,  
And knowledge sure that he endure  
A child until he die—

## THE SEVEN SEAS

For to make plain that man's disdain  
Is but new Beauty's birth—  
For to possess in loneliness  
The joy of all the earth.

As Thou didst teach all lovers speech  
And Life all mystery,  
So shalt Thou rule by every school  
Till love and longing die,  
Who wast or yet the Lights were set,  
A whisper in the Void,  
Who shalt be sung through planets young  
When this is clean destroyed.

Beyond the bounds our staring rounds,  
Across the pressing dark,  
The children wise of outer skies  
Look hitherward and mark

## TO THE TRUE ROMANCE

A light that shifts, a glare that drifts,  
Rekindling thus and thus,  
Not all forlorn, for Thou hast borne  
Strange tales to them of us.

Time hath no tide but must abide  
The servant of Thy will ;  
Tide hath no time, for to Thy rhyme  
The ranging stars stand still—  
Regent of spheres that lock our fears  
Our hopes invisible,  
Oh 'twas certes at Thy decrees  
We fashioned Heaven and Hell !

Pure Wisdom hath no certain path  
That lacks thy morning-eyne,  
And captains bold by Thee controlled  
Most like to Gods design ;

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Thou art the Voice to kingly boys  
To lift them through the fight,  
And Comfortress of Unsuccess,  
To give the dead good-night—

A veil to draw 'twixt God His Law  
And Man's infirmity,  
A shadow kind to dumb and blind  
The shambles where we die ;  
A rule to trick th' arithmetic  
Too base of leaguing odds—  
The spur of trust, the curb of lust,  
Thou handmaid of the Gods !

O Charity, all patiently  
Abiding wrack and scaith !  
O Faith, that meets ten thousand cheats  
Yet drops no jot of faith !

TO THE TRUE ROMANCE

Devil and brute Thou dost transmute  
To higher, lordlier show,  
Who art in sooth that lovely Truth  
The careless angels know !

*Thy face is far from this our war,  
Our call and counter-cry,  
I may not find Thee quick and kind,  
Nor know Thee till I die.*

*Yet may I look with heart unshook  
On blow brought home or missed—  
Yet may I hear with equal ear  
The clarions down the List ;  
Yet set my lance above mischance  
And ride the barriere—  
Oh, hit or miss, how little 'tis,  
My Lady is not there !*

## THE FLOWERS

*'To our private taste, there is always something a little exotic, almost artificial, in songs which, under an English aspect and dress, are yet so manifestly the product of other skies. They affect us like translations; the very fauna and flora are alien, remote; the dog's-tooth violet is but an ill substitute for the rathe primrose, nor can we ever believe that the wood-robin sings as sweetly in April as the English thrush.'*

THE ATHENÆUM.

*B*UY my English posies !  
Kent and Surrey may—  
Violets of the Undercliff—  
Wet with Channel spray;  
Cowslips from a Devon combe—  
Midland furze afire—  
Buy my English posies  
And I 'll sell your heart's desire !

## THE FLOWERS

Buy my English posies !

You that scorn the May,

Won't you greet a friend from home

Half the world away ?

Green against the draggled drift,

Faint and frail and first—

Buy my Northern blood-root

And I'll know where you were nursed :

Robin down the logging-road whistles, ' Come to  
me ! '

Spring has found the maple-grove, the sap is  
running free ;

All the winds of Canada call the ploughing-rain.  
Take the flower and turn the hour, and kiss your  
love again !

Buy my English posies !

Here's to match your need—

Buy a tuft of royal heath,

Buy a bunch of weed

## THE SEVEN SEAS

White as sand of Muysenberg

Spun before the gale—

Buy my heath and hlies

And I 'll tell you whence you hail !

Under hot Constantia broad the vineyards lie—

Throned and thorned the aching berg props the  
speckless sky—

Slow below the Wynberg firs trails the tilted  
wain—

Take the flower and turn the hour, and kiss your  
love again !

Buy my English posies !

You that will not turn—

Buy my hot-wood clematis,

Buy a frond o' fern

Gathered where the Erskine leaps

Down the road to Lorne—

Buy my Christmas creeper

And I 'll say where you were born !

## THE FLOWERS

West away from Melbourne dust holidays  
begin—

They that mock at Paradise woo at Cora Lynn—  
Through the great South Otway gums sings the  
great South Main—

Take the flower and turn the hour, and kiss your  
love again !

Buy my English posies !

Here 's your choice unsold !

Buy a blood-red myrtle-bloom,

Buy the kowhai's gold

Flung for gift on Taupo's face,

Sign that spring is come—

Buy my clinging myrtle

And I 'll give you back your home !

Broom behind the windy town ; pollen o' the  
pine—

Bell-bird in the leafy deep where the *ratas*  
twine—

## THE SEVEN SEAS

Fern above the saddle-bow, flax upon the plain—  
Take the flower and turn the hour, and kiss your  
love again !

Buy my English posies !  
Ye that have your own  
Buy them for a brother's sake  
Overseas, alone.  
Weed ye trample underfoot  
Floods his heart abrim—  
Bird ye never heeded,  
Oh, she calls his dead to him !

Far and far our homes are set round the Seven Seas;  
Woe for us if we forget, we that hold by these !  
Unto each his mother-beach, bloom and bird and  
land—

Masters of the Seven Seas, oh, love and understand !

